

165.

A N
A C C O U N T
O F T H E
Life, Character, and Poems
O F
Mr. BLACKLOCK;

Student of PHILOLOGY, in the University of
EDINBURGH.

By the Rev. Mr. SPENCE;
Late Professor of POETRY, in the University of Oxford.

Kυριος σοφοι τυφλοι.

PSAL. 146. v. 7.

Nature, when scarce fair Light he knew,
Snatch'd Heav'n, Earth, Beauty, from his View;
And Darkness round him reigns:

The Muse with Pity view'd his Doom;
And darting thro' th' eternal Gloom

An Intellectual Ray,
Bade him with Music's Voice inspire
The plaintive Flute, the sprightly Lyre;
And tune th' Impassion'd Lay.

BLACKLOCK's Poems; p. 49.

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S E C T. I.

Some Account of his Life.

I KNOW not how it is; but I always feel myself of such a make, that I can never see a Man of Merit in Distress, without Compassion; and sometimes, even not without Indignation. I do not speak this in the common way of being satirical on the present Age: in which I think, on the contrary, that one may easily distinguish a

greater Propensity, than seems to have been usual in other Ages, towards rewarding such as have particularly deserv'd it: and this goes so far, that I myself can have the Pleasure at present of reckoning ¹ two or three, in the little circle of my own most intimate Friends, who have been rais'd purely by their literary Merit and good Characters, from inconsiderable or no Circumstances, to considerable or at least very easy ones. But there is a Person in the northern Part of our Island, who, (tho' he has been in some degree regarded and cherish'd there,) still very much wants, and very much deserves, the Influence of a kinder Sun.

THE Person I mean is one of the most extraordinary Characters, that has appear'd in this, or (perhaps) in any other Age. His Name is, *Blacklock*; the Son of a ² poor Tradesman, at *Annan*, in *Scotland*: where he was born ³ in the Year 1721. Before he was six Months old ⁴, he was totally depriv'd of his Eye-sight by the Small Pox. His Father, (who by his Account of him must have been a particularly good Man,) had intended to breed him up ⁵ to his own, or some other Trade: but as this Misfortune render'd him incapable of any, all that this worthy Parent could do, was to show the utmost Care and Attention that he was able toward him, in so unfortunate

¹ Mr. *Duck*, Mr. *Dodslēy*; and Mr. *Richardson*.

² Letter from Mr. *Hume*, (Author of the Moral Essays,) to Mr. *Dodslēy*, of March 12, 1754.

³ Account of the Author, prefix'd to the *Edinburgh* Edition, page v.

⁴ Both Letter and Account.

⁵ Account, p. vi.

fortunate a Situation ; and this Goodness of his has left so strong an Impression on the Mind of his Son, that he speaks of it ⁶ with the greatest Warmth of Gratitude and Affection. What was wanting to this poor Youth from the Loss of his Sight and the Narrowness of his Fortune, seems to have been repaid him in the Goodness of his Heart, and the Capacities of his Mind. It was very early, that he show'd a strong Inclination toward Poetry, in particular. His Father, and a few of his other Friends, used often to read, to divert him : and among the rest, they read several Passages out of some of our Poets. These

⁶ Where now, ah ! where is that supporting Arm
Which to my weak unequal Infant Steps
It's kind Assistance lent ? Ah ! where that Love,
That strong assiduous Tenderness, which watch'd
My Wishes, yet scarce form'd ; and to my View
Unimportun'd, like kind indulgent Heav'n,
Their Objects brought ? Ah ! where that gentle Voice,
Which with Instruction, soft as Summer Dews
Or fleecy Snows, descending on my Soul
Distinguish'd ev'ry Hour with new Delight ?
Ah ! where that Virtue, which amid the Storms,
The mingled Horrors of tumultuous Life,
Untainted, unsubdu'd, the Shock sustain'd ?
So firm the Oak, which in eternal Night
As deep it's Root extends, as high to Heav'n
It's Top majestic rises : such the Smile
Of some benignant Angel from the Throne
Of God dispatch'd, Ambassador of Peace ;
Who on his Look imprest his Message bears,
And pleas'd from Earth averts Impending ill.

See his Poems, p. 147.

were his chief Delight and Entertainment. He heard them, not only with an uncommon Pleasure ; but with a sort of ⁷ Congenial Enthusiasm : and from loving and admiring them so much, he soon began to endeavour to imitate them. Among these early Essays of his Genius, there was one which is inserted in his Works. It was compos'd, when he was but ⁸ twelve Years old : and has something very pretty, in the Turn of it ; and very promising, for one of so tender an Age.

PROVIDENCE was so kind as to indulge him in the Assistance of this good Father, ⁹ till he was nineteen : and as this Misfortune, when it did happen, necessitated his falling into more Hands than he had ever before been us'd to ; it was from that time that he began, by degrees, ¹⁰ to be somewhat more talk'd of ; and his extraordinary Talents, more known. It was about a Year after, that he was sent for to *Edinburgh* ; by Dr. *Stevenson*, a Man of Taste, and one of the Physicians in that City : ¹¹ who had the Goodness to supply him with every thing necessary for his living, and studying, in the University there. Mr. *Blacklock* looks on this Gentleman, as his *Mæcenas* : and the Poem placed at the Entrance to his Works, is a Gratitude-Piece, address'd to him ; ¹² in Imitation of the First Ode of *Horace*, to that great Patron.

AFTER he had follow'd his Studies at *Edinburgh*, for four Years ; ¹³ he retreated from thence into

⁷ Account. p. vi. ⁸ Poems. p. 73. ⁹ In 1740, Account. p. vii. ¹⁰ Ibid. ¹¹ Ibid. ¹² See his Poems, p. i. ¹³ Account. p. vii.

into the Country, on the breaking out of the Rebellion, in 1745: and it was during this Receſſ, that he was prevail'd on by some of his Friends, to publish a little Collection of his Poems, ¹⁴ at *Glasgow*. When that Tempeſt was blown over, and the Calm entirely restor'd, he return'd again to the University of *Edinburgh*; and has purſu'd his Studies there, for ¹⁵ six Years more. The ſecond Edition of his Poems was publish'd by him there, in ¹⁶ the Beginning of the preſent Year, very much improv'd, ¹⁷ and enlarged: and they might have been much more numerous than they are; had not Mr. *Blacklock* shown a great deal more Nicenesſ and ¹⁸ Delicacy than is uſual: and kept ſeveral Pieces from the Press for Reasons that ſeem'd much stronger to himself, than they did to his Friends: ſome of whom were concern'd at his Excess of Scrupulousneſſ; and much wiſh'd not to have had him depriv'd of ſo much more Reputation, nor the World of ſo many Poetical Beauties as (they ¹⁹ ſay) abounded in them.

MR. *Blacklock* during his ten Years Studies at the University, ²⁰ "has not only acquired a great Knowledge in the *Greek*, *Latin*, and *French* Languages; but also made a conſiderable Progress in-all the Sciences." And, (what is yet more extraordinary,) has attain'd a conſiderable Excellence in Poetry; tho' the chief Inlets for Poetical Ideas are bar'd up in him: and all the visible Beauties of the Creation have been long

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since

¹⁴ Ib. p. viii.¹⁵ Ibid.¹⁶ Mr. *Hume's Letter*.¹⁷ Account. p. viii. ¹⁸ Ib. p. xi. ¹⁹ Ibid. ²⁰ What is between the Marks is transcrib'd from Mr. *Hume's Letter*.

since totally blotted out of his Memory. How far he has contriv'd, by the uncommon Force of his Genius, to compensate for this vast Defect ; with what Elegance, and Harmony, he often writes ; with how much Propriety, how much Sense, and how much Emotion ; are things as easy to be perceiv'd in reading his Poems, as they would be difficult to be fully accounted for. Consider'd in either of these Points, he will appear to have a great Share of Merit ; but if thoroughly consider'd in all together, I am very much inclin'd to say, (with his Friend Mr. *Hume*,) “ he may be regarded as a Prodigy.”

WE have had no farther Light as yet in relation to Mr. *Blacklock*, than what is contain'd in the Account prefix'd to the *Edinburgh* Edition of his Poems, by one of his Friends ; a Letter from Mr. *Hume*, (Author of the Essays,) to Mr. *Dodfley*; a Note or two affix'd to his Poems, by some other Friends ; and what one can glean up, here and there, from Passages in the Poems themselves. As these have afforded so few Materials for a Life, (in the former Part of which he was placed so low, and in the latter has been chiefly busied in his Studies;) I shall take the Liberty of being much more diffuse on his Moral Character : for which, his own Writings will supply me with very ample Materials.

S E C T. II.

Of his Moral Character.

ONE of his Friends speaks of the ²¹ “ happy Temper of his Mind ;” Mr. *Hume* says, ²² that his “ Modesty is equal to the Goodness of his Disposition, and the Beauty of his Genius :” and the Author of the Account, where he is speaking of the Pieces which Mr. *Blacklock* would not suffer to be printed, and which (he ²³ says) abound with so many Poetical Beauties, that nothing could do him greater Honour ; immediately corrects himself, and adds : “ Yet I must still except his private Character ; “ which, were it generally known, would recommend him more to the public Esteem, “ than the united Talents of an accomplish’d Writer.”

AMONG his particular Virtues, one of the first to be admired is his Ease and Contentedness of Mind ; under so many Circumstances, any one almost of which might be thought capable of depressing it. Considering the Meanness of his Birth ; the Lowness of his Situation ; the Despicableness, (at least, as he himself speaks of it,) of his Person ; the Narrowness, and Difficulties, of his Fortune ; and, above all, his so early Loss of his Sight, and his Incapacity from thence of any way relieving himself under all these Burthens ; it

²¹ Poems. p. 177 ; Note. ²² In his Letter to Mr. *Dodsley*. ²³ Account. p. xi.

it may be reckon'd no small Degree of Virtue in him, even not to be generally dispirited and complaining.

EACH of these humiliating Circumstances ²⁴ he speaks of, in some Part or other of his Poems ; but

1.

²⁴ Sustain'd by Labour, and obscurely born.

p. 97. v. 8.

2.

A barren Fortune, and a hopeless Love.

p. 94. v. 8.

Obscure, depress'd, and scorn'd.

p. 4. v. 20.

3.

What tho' no native Charms my Person grace ?

p. 97. v. 15.

And in his ludicrous Poem :

Straight is my Person, but of little Size ;

Lean are my Cheeks, and hollow are my Eyes : &c.

p. 175.

And speaking of both these, and his Blindness together, he says,

Hence oft the Hand of Ignorance and Scorn,
To barb'rous Mirth abandon'd, points me out
With Idiot Grin : the supercilious Eye,
Oft from the Noise and Glare of prosp'rous Life,
On my Obscurity diverts it's Gaze
Exulting; and, with wanton Pride inflate,
Felicitates it's own superiour Lot :
Inhuman Triumph ! ———

Hence the warm Blush that paints ingenuous Shame,
By conscious Want inspir'd ; th' unpitied Pang
Of Love, and Friendship slighted. ———

p. 145.

but what he dwells upon with the most lasting
Cast of Melancholy, is his Loss of Sight ; which,
in

4.

— Nor can these useless Hands,
Untutor'd in each life-sustaining Art,
Nourish this wretched Being ; and supply
Frail Nature's Wants ; that short Cessation know.

p. 146.

5.

From these intrusive Thoughts all Pleasure flies ;
And leaves my Soul benighted, like my Eyes.

p. 166.

And in his melancholy Poem ; in a Passage which, tho' so long, is poetical enough to deserve transcribing.

For, oh !—while others gaze on Nature's Face,
The verdant Vale, the Mountains, Woods, and Streams ;
Or with Delight ineffable survey
The Sun, bright Image of his Parent God :
The Seasons, in majestic Order, round
This vary'd Globe revolving ; young-ey'd Spring,
Profuse of Life and Joy ; Summer adorn'd
With keen Effulgence, bright'ning Heav'n and Earth :
Autumn, replete with Nature's various Boon,
To bless the toiling Hind ; and Winter, grand
With rapid Storms, convulsing Nature's Frame,
Whilst others view Heav'n's all-involving Arch,
Bright with unnumber'd Worlds ; and, lost in Joy,
Fair Order and Utility behold :
Or unfatigu'd th' amazing Chain pursue,
Which in one vast all-comprehending whole
Unites th' immense stupendous Works of God ;
Conjoining Part with Part, and thro' the Frame
Diffusing sacred Harmony and Joy :
To me, those fair Vicissitudes are lost ;

And

in one Place, carries him on in a deplored Stile, for above fifty Lines together. But, at the same time, it ought to be consider'd, that this is in a Piece written when his Spirits were particularly depress'd, by an Incident that ²⁵ very nearly threatened his Life; from which he had but just escap'd, with a great deal of Difficulty; and with all the
Terrors

And Grace and Beauty blotted from my View.
The verdant Vale, the Mountains, Woods, and Streams,
One horrid Blank appear; the young-ey'd Spring,
Effulgent Summer, Autumn deck'd in Wealth
To bless the toiling Hind, and Winter grand
With rapid Storms, revolve in vain for me:
Nor the bright Sun, nor all-embracing Arch
Of Heav'n, shall e'er these wretched Orbs behold.

O Beauty, Harmony! You Sister train
Of Graces, you who in th' admiring Eye
Of God your Charms display'd ere yet transcrib'd
On Nature's Form your heavenly Features shone,
Why are you snatch'd for ever from my Sight!
Whilst, in your stead, a boundless waste Expanse
Of undistinguish'd Horror covers all.
Wide, o'er my Prospect, rueful Darkness breathes
Her inauspicious Vapour: in whose Shade
Fear, Grief, and Anguish, Natives of her Reign,
In social Sadness gloomy Vigils keep.
With them I walk; with them still doom'd to share
Eternal Blackness, without Hopes of Dawn.

Poems. p. 143, &c.

²⁵ See the Beginning of his Soliloquy, p. 141; a Poem, (as he there says,) occasioned by his Escape from falling into a deep Well; where he must have been irrecoverably lost, if a favourite Lap-Dog had not, (by the Sound of its Feet upon the Board with which th^e Well was cover'd,) warn'd him of his Danger.

Terrors of so great a Danger, and the Dejection occasioned by them, just fresh upon his Mind.

IT is in the same melancholy Poem, that he expresses his Dread of falling into extreme Want; in the following very strong, and moving Manner:

Dejecting Prospect!—Soon the hapless Hour
 May come—perhaps, this Moment it impends!—
 Which drives me forth to Penury and Cold,
 Naked, and beat by all the Storms of Heav'n;
 Friendless, and guideless, to explore my Way:
 Till, on cold Earth this poor unshelter'd Head
 Reclining, vainly from the ruthless Blast
 Respite I beg; and, in the Shock, expire ²⁶.

THESE, alas! are Fears, that he has often had but too much Reason to entertain. However, his good Sense, and Religion, have enabled him to get the better of them, and of all his other Calamities, in his calmer Hours; and indeed, in this very Poem, (which is the most gloomy of any he has written,) he seems to have a Gleam of Light ²⁷ fall in upon his Mind: and recovers himself

²⁶ Poems. p. 147.

²⁷ As yet my Soul ne'er felt th' oppressive Weight
 Of Indigence, unaided: swift Redress,
 Beyond the daring Flight of Hope, approach'd;
 And ev'ry Wish of Nature amply bless'd:
 Tho' o'er the future Series of my Fate
 Ill Omens seem to brood, and Stars malign
 To blend their baleful Fire; oft while the Sun
 Darts boundless Glory thro' th' Expanse of Heav'n
 A Gloom of congregated Vapours rise,

Than

himself enough to express his Hopes that the Care of Providence, which has hitherto always protected him, will again interfere ; and dissipate the Clouds, that were gathering over him.

TOWARDS the Close of the same Piece, he shows not only that he is satisfied with his own Condition, but

Than Night more dreadful in her blackest Shroud,
And o'er the Face of Things incumbent hang
Portending Tempest : till the Source of Day
Again asserts the Empire of the Sky ;
And o'er the blotted Scene of Nature throws
A keener Splendor. So perhaps that Care,
Thro' all Creation felt, but most by Man,
(Which hears with kind Regard the tender Sigh
Of modest Want,) may dissipate my Fears ;
And bid my Hours a happier Flight assume

Poems. p. 150.

" What then ! because th' indulgent Sire of all
Has in the Plan of Things prescrib'd my Sphere,
Because consummate Wisdom thought not fit
In Affluence and Pomp to bid me shine,
Shall I regret my Destiny ? and curse
That State by Heav'n's paternal Care design'd
To train me up for Scenes, with which compar'd
These Ages measur'd by the Orbs of Heaven
In blank Annihilation fade away ?
For Scenes, where finish'd by Almighty Art
Beauty and Order open to the Sight
In vivid Glory ; where the faintest Rays
Out-flash the Splendor of our mid-day Sun.
Say, shall the Source of all, who first assign'd
To each Constituent of this wond'rous Frame
It's proper Pow'rs, it's Place and Action due,

but that he can discover some very great Blessings in it ; and through the general Course of his other Poems, one may discern such a Justness of Thinking about the Things of this World, and such an easy and contented Turn of Mind, as is every way becoming a good Christian and a good Philosopher : to be a little more particular.

He finds out some Benefit, or other, to set against ²⁹ every one of his Misfortunes.

He

With due Degrees of Weakness, (whence results
Concord ineffable,) shall he reverse
Or disconcert the universal Scheme,
The general Good, to flatter selfish Pride
And blind Desire?—Before th' Almighty Voice
From Non-existence call'd me into Life,
What Claim had I to Being? What to shine
In this high Rank of Creatures, form'd to climb
The steep Ascent of Virtue, unrelax'd
Till infinite Perfection crown their Toil?

p. 151.

29. What tho' no sounding Names my Race adorn,
Sustain'd by Labour, and obscurely born?
With fairest Flow'rs the humble Vales are spread;
Whilst endless Tempests beat the Mountain's Head.
What tho' by Fate no Riches are my Share?
Riches, are Parents of eternal Care:
While, in the lowly Hut, and silent Grove,
Content plays smiling with her Sister Love.
What tho' no native Charms my Person grace;
Nor Beauty moulds my Form, nor paints my Face?
The sweetest Fruit may often pall the Taste,
While Sloes and Brambles yield a safe Repast.

p. 97.
Even

He shows the utmost Detestation ³⁰ of Avarice ; and is so far from dreading Poverty, that he makes it a Part ³¹ of his Wish

He seems to have no earnest Desires for anything, except ³² Knowledge, and a ³³ moderate Share

Even as to his Blindness, he comforts himself by a comparative Consideration of other Beings inferior to Man ; who, though they enjoy the Benefit of Sight, are insensible (as he supposes) of the Pleasures of Music, Knowledge, Conversation, and Universal Benevolence. (p. 148 & 149.) Under the Notion of Music, he comprehends that of Poetry ; and this seems to be a favourite Idea with him, for he repeats it on a like Occasion, in his Poem to a young Gentleman bound for Guinea.

Poems. p. 49.

³⁰ In his Hymn to Benevolence, he thus addresses himself to that Source of all Virtues:

O come, and o'er my Bosom reign,
Expand my Heart, inflame each Vein ;
Through ev'ry Action shine :
Each low, each selfish Wish controul ;
With all thy Essence warm my Soul,
And make me wholly thine !

Nor let fair Virtue's mortal Bane
The Soul-contracting Thirst of Gain

My faintest Wishes fway :
By her possess'd ere Hearts refine,
In Hell's dark Depth shall Mercy shine
And kindle endless Day.

p. 25.

³¹ See the three first Stanzas in his Poem under that Name.

p. 125.

³² —————— The sacred Fane
Of Knowledge, scarce accessible to me,
With heart-consuming Anguish I behold :
Knowledge, for which my Soul infatiate burns
With ardent Thirst ——————

p. 146.

And,

Share of Fame ; nor to feel the Want of any Power, except ³⁴ that of doing good.

He is very open, in owning his own ³³ Faults ;
and

And, a little after :

Perhaps, enlivening Hope ! perhaps my Soul,
May drink at Wisdom's Fountain ; and allay
Her unextinguish'd Ardor in the Stream !

p. 150.

It is from the same Passion, that he has long'd so vehemently to be acquainted with the most eminent Persons of his Times ; or, as I shou'd rather have said, with the Chief of them all, Mr. Pope. Tho' what he says above of his longing for Knowledge, is so very strongly express'd ; this still exceeds it. He says, that he long'd for it more than for any thing upon Earth ; even, than for the Restoration of his Eye-sight. See p. 138, and 139.

³³ My humbler Function shall I name,
My sole Delight, my highest Aim ?
Inspir'd thro' breezy Shades to stray,
Where choral Nymphs and Graces play ;
Above th' unthinking Herd to soar,
Who sink forgot and are no more :
To snatch from Fate an honest Fame,
Is all I hope, and all I claim.

p. 4.

But this Desire of Fame, is only for a moderate Share of it ; as appears from what he says in another Place.

Pray'd I, that Fame shou'd bear my Name on high,
Through nation'd Earth or all-involving Sky ?

p. 139, v. 6.

³⁴ ————— Hence the Fear

Of impotent Compassion ; when the Voice
Of Pain by others felt, quick smites my Heart ;
And rouses all it's Tenderness, in vain !

p. 145.

See, Account ; p. xi. and xii.

³⁵ Like all Mankind, with Vanity I'm blest ;
Conscious of Wit, I never yet possess'd :

and as honest, in speaking of his own ³⁶ Virtues. Innocence, he thinks, ought to be bold ; ³⁷ and with him Vice is the only thing, that should be able to make a Man dastardly and fearful.

IT

To strong Desires my Heart an easy-prey
Oft feels their Force, but never owns their Sway :
This Hour, perhaps, as Death I hate my Foe ;
The next, I wonder why I shou'd do so :
Tho' poor, the Rich I view with careless Eye.

p. 176. ¶. 11.

³⁶ Tho' poor, the Rich I view with careless Eye ;
Scorn a vain Oath, and hate a serious Lie :
I ne'er for Satire torture common Sense ;
Nor shew my Wit at God's, nor Man's Expence :
Harmless I live, unknowing and unknown ;
Wish well to all, and yet do Good to none :
Unmerited Contempt I hate to bear ;
Yet on my Faults like others' am severe :
Dishonest Flames my Bosom never fire ;
The Bad I pity, and the Good admire.

Ibid. ¶. 20.

³⁷ When raving in eternal Pains
And loaded with ten thousand Chains,
Vice deep in *Phlegethon* yet lay
Nor with her Visage blasted Day,
No Fear to guiltless Man was known ;
For God and Virtue reign'd alone :
But when from native Flames and Night
The cursed Monster wing'd her Flight ;
Pale Fear among her hideous Train,
Chas'd sweet Contentment from her Reign :
Banish'd from Day her dear Delight ;
And shook, with conscious Starts, the Night.

p. 28.

IT must have been this Boldness of Innocence alone, which could enable a Man of such a Character as all his Friends agree in giving him, to make so solemn ³⁸ an Appeal to Heaven, about the past Course of his Life ; or so strong a Wish against himself, ³⁹ if he should ever desert Virtue in the remaining Part of it.

THERE is either an uncommon Warmth, or Tenderness, in his Ideas of all the nearer Connexions in Life. His extream Gratitude and Affection for his Father has been mentioned ⁴⁰ already ; and he shows due Proportions of the same, in speaking of other Relations, ⁴¹ and Friends.

B 2

INDEED

³⁸ Behold, O God ! behold me stand,
And to thy strict Regard disclose
Whate'er was acted by my Hand ;
Whate'er my inmost Thoughts propose :
If Vice indulg'd their Candor stain,
Be all my Portion Bitternes and Pain.

p. 20.

³⁹ This is in his Hymn to Benevolence; as addressing which, he says :

If from thy sacred Paths I turn ;
Nor feel their Griefs while others mourn,
Nor with their Pleasures glow :
Banish'd from GOD, from Bliss, and thee,
My own Tormentor let me be ;
And groan in hopeless Woe.

p. 26.

⁴⁰ In Note, p. 2.

⁴¹ His single Poem to a Friend bound for Guinea, may supply us with Instances of both.

Yet

INDEED he is so far from being ⁴² any Man's
Enemy, that he extends his brotherly ⁴³ Regards
to

Yet think ! by ev'ry keener Smart
That thrills a Friend's, or Brother's Heart,
 By all the Griefs that rise
And with dumb Anguish heave the Breast,
When Absence robs the Soul of Rest
 And swells with Tears the Eyes;

By all our Sorrows ever new,
Think ! whom you fly, and what pursue ;
 And judge by your's our Pain :
From Friendship's dear tenacious Arms,
You fly perhaps to War's Alarms ;
 To angry Skies and Main.

And after speaking of the Beauties of the Country which he leaves, he adds :

But why such weak Attractions name ?
While ev'ry warmer social Claim
 Demands the mournful Lay ;
Ah ! hear a Brother's mournful Sighs !
Thro' Tears behold a Sister's Eyes
 Emit a faded Ray !

p. 47, and 48.

⁴² There seems to be much Honesty in his Answer to a Gentleman, who ask'd his Sentiments of him :

Dear *Fabius*, me if well you know,
You ne'er will take me for your Foe :
If right yourself you comprehend,
You ne'er will take me for your Friend.

p. 178.

⁴³ For this has Heaven to Virtue's glorious Stage
Call'd me ; and plac'd the Garland in my View,
The Wreath of Conquest. Basely to desert,
The Part assign'd me ; and with daftard Fear
From present Pain, the Cause of future Bliss,

To

to all Mankind. His Benevolence is ⁴⁴ universal ; he always speaks of that great Source of Virtue, as the ⁴⁵ greatest Source too of ⁴⁶ Happiness and Joy : and (what is somewhat particular) he thinks it so not only to Man, but to all God's Creatures ; ⁴⁷ even to the least of Insects.

B 3

HE

To shrink into the Bosom of the Grave ;—

How then is Gratitude's vast Debt repaid ?

Where all the tender Offices of Love

Due to fraternal Man, in which the Heart

Each Blessing it communicates enjoys ?

p. 153.

⁴⁴ See p. 165. §. 11. &c.

⁴⁵ Beatitude supreme in giving Joy.

p. 162. §. 11.

⁴⁶ Hail, Source of Transport ever new !

While I thy strong Impulse pursue

I taste a Joy sincere :

Too vast for little Minds to know,

Who on themselves alone bestow

Their Wishes and their Care.—

By thee inspir'd the generous Breast,

In blessing others only blest,

With Goodness large and free

Delights the Widow's Tears to stay ;

To teach the Blind their smoothest Way,

And aid the feeble Knee.

Hymn to Benevolence, p. 24, and 25.

⁴⁷ Thou fill'st the Waste of Ocean, Earth and Air,

With Multitudes that swim, or walk, or fly ;

From rolling Worlds descends thy generous Care

To insect Crowds, that scape the nicest Eye :

For each a Sphere was circumscrib'd by thee :

To bless, and to be blest, their noblest End,

To which, with speedy Course, they all unerring tend.

p. 22.

HE looks upon Virtue as the Cause of ⁴⁸ Happiness to Man, in the whole Extent of his Being ; and on Vice as the Cause of his ⁴⁹ Misery, and Unhappiness.

His Thoughts of Death are such, as I should imagine every Wife and Good Man must entertain of it ; and if they are not more commonly to be met with, it will only prove that Men of both those Characters are not so common as one would wish. He looks upon Death ⁵⁰ as a thing rather

to

And in his Hymn to Benevolence ;
 We see its Energy prevail,
 Thro' Being's ever rising Scale ;
 From nothing, even to God.

p. 24.

⁴⁸ Fair Virtue shines to all display'd ;
 Nor asks the tardy Schoolman's Aid,
 To teach us what is right.

Pleasure and Pain she sets in View.

p. 60.

⁴⁹ Curs'd with unnumber'd groundless Fears
 How pale yon shivering Wretch appears !
 For him the Day-light shines in vain ;
 For him, the Fields no Joys contain :—
 Impending Mists deform the Sky,
 And Beauty withers in his Eye, &c.

See p. 32, and 33.

But since all Crimes their Hell contain ;
 Since all must feel, who merit Pain, &c.

p. 29. y. 20.

⁵⁰ ————— Reason will dispel
 Those fancy'd Terrors. Reason will instruct thee,
 That Death is Heaven's kind interposing Hand,

To

to be desired, than to be fear'd ; as a Relief from all the Bustle, and Troubles, of this Life : and as the Initiation, or Entrance, into a much nobler State of Life, an uninterrupted State of Immortality and Joy.

HIS Ideas of the Deity are uncommonly great and noble. He speaks of God, as compleating the whole Creation ^{s¹} by a single Thought ; and of his ^{s²} distressing, or reviving all things, only

B 4 by

To snatch thee timely from impending Woe ;
From aggregated Misery, whose Pangs
Can find no other Period but the Grave. p. 14.

— Who wou'd not sink
A while in Tears and Sorrow ; then emerge
With tenfold Lustre, Triumph o'er his Pain,
And with unfading Glory shine in Heaven ?

p. 153.

While Life gives Pleasure, Life shall still remain ;
Till Death, with gentle Hand, shall shut the pleasing Scene ;
Safe, fable Guide, to that celestial Shore
Where Pleasure knows no End, and Change is fear'd no more.

p. 53.

^{s¹} See p. 34. posthac. — Hail Sovereign Goodness, &c.

^{s²} If one Moment thou thy Face should'st hide,
Thy Glory clouded or thy Smiles deny'd,
Then widow'd Nature veils her mournful Eyes ;
And vents her Grief in universal Sighs. —

But when again thy Glory is display'd,
Reviv'd Creation lifts her cheerful Head :
New rising Forms thy potent Smiles obey,
And Life rekindles at the genial Ray ;
United Thanks replenish'd Nature pays,
And Heav'n and Earth resound their Maker's Praise.

p. 14.

by casting a single Regard toward them, or looking from them. He considers the Love of God as the only ⁵³ satisfactory Object for Happiness in this World : and he shows how strong this is in his own Mind, by the Warmth which ⁵⁴ animates his Prayers, and Thanksgivings, to his Maker. He carries this so far, that in one Place, (tho' he ex-

⁵³ See, *The Wish satisfy'd*, p. 35, to 39.

⁵⁴ While this immortal Spark of heav'nly Flame
Distends my Breast, and animates my Frame,
To thee my ardent Praises shall be borne
On the first Breeze that wakes the blushing Morn ;
The latest Star shall hear the pleasing Sound,
And Nature in full Choir shall join around :
When full of thee my Soul excursive flies
Thro' Earth, Air, Ocean, or thy regal Skies ;
From World to World, new Wonders still I find,
And all the Godhead flashes on my Mind.

p. 15.

And in his Hymn to Divine Love :

To thee, munific ever-flaming Love !

One endless Hymn united Nature sings ;
To thee, the bright Inhabitants above
Tune the glad Voice, and sweep the warbling Strings :
From Pole to Pole, on ever-waving Wings
Winds waft thy Praise, by rolling Planets tun'd ;
Aid then, O Love, my Voice to emulate the Sound.

It comes ! it comes ! I feel internal Day !

Transfusive Warmth through all my Bosom glows :
My Soul expanding gives the Torrent way ;
Thro' all my Veins it kindles as it flows.

Thus ravish'd from the Scene of Night and Woes,
Oh snatch me, bear me to thy happy Reign !
There teach my Tongue thy Praise, in more exalted Strains.

p. 23.

expresses his inferior Abilities as to the Form,) he seems unwilling to yield even to the angelic Order of Beings, " as to the Sincerity and Ardency of his Devotions.

THO' I have read Mr. *Blacklock's Poems* enough, to have entertain'd as high an Opinion of them, as any one can well have; yet my going from his Moral Character to his Poetical one, seems a very great Fall to me: and I feel a sensible Uneasiness in quitting the former, even whilst I am entering on so agreeable a Subject as the latter.

S E C T. III.

Of his Poetical Character.

THERE is a great Perspicuity, Neatness, and even Elegance of Stile, to be observed in several of his Pieces: particularly, in his ⁵⁶ *Wish*, (which has so many other Beauties;) in his Imitation ⁵⁷ of one of the Psalms; his Poem

on

⁵⁵ By thee, O God! by thy paternal Arm,
Through ev'ry Period of my infant State
Sustain'd, I live to yield thee Praises due.
O cou'd my Lays, with heav'nly Raptures warm,
High as thy Throne re-echo to the Songs
Of Angels! thence, O! cou'd my Pray'r obtain
One Beam of Inspiration, to inflame
And animate my Numbers! Heav'n's full Choir
In loftier Strains th'inspiring God might sing;
But not more ardent, more sincere, than mine.

p. 155.

⁵⁶ Poems, p. 125.⁵⁷ The 139th. p. 5.

“⁵⁸ on the Refinements in Metaphysical Philosophy, (in which he owns ⁵⁹ he had plung’d too deep, formerly, himself; in his new Dressing the ⁶⁰ old *Scotch* Song; and his Ode, ⁶¹ to a Coquet.

THE last mention’d of these is written with something of a gayer Air, than is usual in his Poems; tho’ he is far from wanting a Talent for Vivacity and Satire, if he would give himself leave to indulge it: but he is so good-natur’d, that he has scarce given us any direct Specimen of it against any one, except himself. This is in the Piece called the ⁶² Author’s Picture: From which, and his ⁶³ earliest Piece of all, (that has some Glances of the same Kind,) it may fairly enough be conjectur’d, that he had a natural Bent this Way; and it might probably have appear’d much more frequently, and more strongly in his Writings, had it not been for his superior Goodness of Heart, and his being struck (as soon as he came to a reasoning Age) so much more strongly, with the Charms of Morality and Philosophy.

HIS ⁶⁴ Pastoral Song, and his Ode ⁶⁵ to a Friend that was going abroad, are very well written, each in their Way; and have beside, several good pathetic Strokes in them. His ⁶⁶ Pastoral, inscrib’d to *Evanthé*, is poetical as well pathetic, to a great Degree; and his ⁶⁷ Soliloquy is both, in a very high one.

HIS Elegy ⁶⁸ on *Constantia* flows on, all in one Stream of Distress and Passion; and rises, about

⁵⁸ P. 58. ⁵⁹ Ibid. St. 1. ⁶⁰ P. 76. ⁶¹ P. 54.
⁶² P. 174. ⁶³ P. 73. ⁶⁴ P. 82. ⁶⁵ P. 46. ⁶⁶ P. 90.
⁶⁷ P. 141. ⁶⁸ P. 156.

about the Middle of the Piece, to very high Poetry.

THIS with the Soliloquy just mention'd, and two of his Hymns, (one ⁶⁹ to the Supreme Being, and the other ⁷⁰ to Fortitude, are the Parts of his Poems which would be the most proper of any to prove that he is not incapable of himself to rise to a true Sublimity ; both of Thinking, and Writing.

HIS Hymn to ⁷¹ Benevolence is an amiable Piece, for its inlarged Notions : and both that and his Ode ⁷² to a Lady on the Loss of her Child, abound as much in good Morals, as they do in good Sense and Poetry.

HIS Translation of ⁷³ Buchanan's *Desiderium Lutetiae*, and his own ⁷⁴ Plaintive Shepherd, give the best Proofs of his Ease and Fluency in the Pastoral Sort of Versification : and in the latter of these, there is a strong Instance of his varying his Notes according to the Occasion. I mean, ⁷⁵ where he speaks of his own Distress in slow solemn Numbers ; and of his Rival's Happiness in a more enliven'd and joyous run of Verse. Much the same thing may be observ'd in his two Odes, printed ⁷⁶ together ; one writ in the Time of Sickness, and the other on Health.

THESE sorts of Miscellaneous Poems have not generally much of planning in them. The best plan'd among Mr. Blacklock's seem to be his ⁷⁷ Wish satisfied, and ⁷⁸ the Monody ; the latter of

⁶⁹ P. 8.

⁷⁰ P. 26.

⁷¹ P. 24.

⁷² P. 65.

⁷³ P. 100.

⁷⁴ P. 95.

⁷⁵ P. 98. and 3, to 20.

⁷⁶ P. 70,

and 71.

⁷⁷ P. 35.

⁷⁸ P. 109.

of which, beside this Merit, is very pathetic, and very poetical.

As all general Commendations are of less Force, and more to be suspected ; I shall give several particular Instances from his Works, which I believe will be fully sufficient to evince, that he has the true Spirit of Poetry in him.

THE most distinguishing Character of Poetry, is to be descriptive ; and it is this which gives the very near Relation that there is, between Poetry, and Painting.

MR. *Blacklock* is very descriptive, in many Parts of his Poems ; but 'tis very easy to be observ'd that, where his Descriptions are of any Length, they are generally not Descriptions of Things, but of Passions. To which one may add, that they turn much more on the melancholy Passions, than the joyous or pleasing ones. Both of which are perhaps to be accounted for, from his unfortunate Loss of his Sight in his Infancy.

In spight of this, how pretty is his Description of a modest Lady going to be married ?

See, the wish'd-for Dawn appears !

A more than wonted Glow she wears .—

Awake, you Nymphs, the blushing Bride !

T' eclipse *Aurora's* rosy Pride :

While virgin Shame retards her Way ;

And Love, half-angry, chides her Stay ⁷⁹.

And how different, are the Characters of his Minstrels ?

⁷⁹ Poems, p. 52.

Panting

Panting Bosoms, speaking Eyes ;
Yielding Smiles, and trembling Sighs.⁸⁰

He thus expresses his own Passion, for
Urania :

Amid the cooling Fragrance of the Morn
How sweet with her thro' lonely Fields to stray !
Her Charms the loveliest Landskip shall adorn ;
And add new Glories to the rising Day.

With her, all Nature shines in heighten'd Bloom ;
The silver Stream in sweeter Music flows :
Odours more rich the fanning Gales perfume ;
And deeper Tinctures paint the spreading Rose.

With her the Shades of Night their Horrors lose ;
It's deepest Silence charms, if she be by :
Her Voice the Music of the Dawn renews ;
It's lambent Radiance sparkles in her Eye⁸¹.

His Introduction⁸² of the Angel to solve his Doubts, when his own Reason is at a loss in the Pursuit of Happiness, shows how poetical an Imagination he has : as his making a Person of Content, and representing her in the Manner he does, is the Effect of a very pretty one ; tho' it takes up no more than a single Line.

While in the lowly Hut, and silent Grove,
“ Content plays smiling with her Sister Love⁸³. ”

THE Picture of Discord, may serve as a Contrast to the former :

Discord, at whose tremendous View
Hell quakes with Horror ever new,

No

⁸⁰ P. 37. ⁸¹ P. 128. ⁸² P. 39. y. 9. to the End of that Poem. ⁸³ P. 97. y. 14.

No more by endless Night depress'd
 Pours all her Venom thro' each Breast :
 And, while deep Groans and Carnage is increas'd,
 Smiles grim, the rising Mischief to enjoy ^{84.}

THE Description of a Person whilst drowning, and the Expression of the Grief of his Friends standing on the Bank, and unable to assist him ; are equally strong and poetical.

Rang'd on the Brink the weeping Matrons stand,
 The lovely Wreck of Fortune to survey ;
 While o'er the Flood he wav'd his beauteous Hand,
 Or in convulsive Anguish struggling lay ;
 By slow Degrees they view'd his Force decay,
 In fruitless Efforts to regain the Shore ; [no more ! ^{85.}]
 They view'd, and mourn'd his Fate—O Heaven, they cou'd

THE Distress of a blind Man, (when suddenly alarm'd with a Danger that threatens his Life, tho' the Extent and Nature of that Danger is unknown to him) is thus strongly and abruptly express'd in the Entrance to his Soliloquy.

Where am I?—O Eternal Power of Heav'n
 Relieve me!—Or amid the silent Gloom
 Can Danger's Cry approach no gen'rous Ear
 Prompt to address the Unhappy?—O my Heart!—
 What shall I do? or whither shall I turn?—
 Will no kind Hand, benevolent as Heav'n,
 Save me involv'd in Peril, and in Night! ⁸⁶

THIS has a very near Resemblance to the pathetic Manner of *Sophocles*, (particularly, in the first Scene of his *Philoctetes*:) as the following Lines

⁸⁴ Poems. p. 41.

⁸⁵ Ib. p. 115.

⁸⁶ P. 141.

Lines on Love, from his old *Scotch Song*, contain some of the very Expressions of *Sappho*.

He fix'd his Look, he sigh'd, he quak'd;
His Colour went, and came:
Dark grew his Een, his Ears resound;
His Breast was all on Flame ^{87.}

NOT less strong is his Account of the first Attack of a violent Love.

There, from the Nymphs retir'd deppress'd she lay;
To unremitting Pain a smiling Prey:
Even then I saw her, as an Angel bright;
I saw ! I lov'd ! I perish'd at the Sight !
I sigh'd, I blush'd; I gaz'd with fix'd Surprize:
And all my Soul hung raptur'd in my Eyes ^{88.}

AND he shews much the same Force, in speaking of his Rival's Happiness ⁸⁹; and his own Jealousy and Constancy.

HIS Description of the Effects of a guilty Conscience, is as Poetical as it is Just. In speaking of a very wicked Person, he says :

In hopes his Terror to elude,
By Day, he minglest with the Crowd :
Yet finds his Soul to Fears a Prey,
In busy Crowds, and open Day.
If Night alone his Walk surprize,
What horrid Visions round him rise !
That blasted Oak, which meets his way,
Shown by the Meteor's sudden Ray,

The

⁸⁷ Poems. p. 83 ⁸⁸ P. 93. ⁸⁹ P. 34, 35. See
p. 128, &c. 17; to 129, &c. 4.

(The midnight Murd'rer's known Retreat,) Felt Heav'n's avengeful Bolt of late : The clashing Chain, the Groan profound, Loud from yon ruin'd Tow'r resound : And now the spot he seems to tread Where some self-slaughter'd Corse was laid ; Beneath his Steps Earth seems to bend ; Deep Murmurs from her Caves ascend : Till all his Soul, by Fancy sway'd, Sees horrid Phantoms crowd the Shade. ⁹⁰

THERE is very much of the same Force, and the same Way of Thinking, in his Description of Horror : where he breaks out thus, all at once.

And, shield me Heav'n ! what hollow Sound,
Like Fate's dread Knell, runs echoing round ?
The Bell strikes One ; that magic Hour,
When rising Fiends exert their Pow'r :
And now, sure now, some Cause Unblest
Breathes more than Horror thro' my Breast.
How deep the Breeze ! how dim the Light !
What Spectres swim before my Sight ! ⁹¹

I HAD a very early Occasion of mentioning his Force in describing both Parental Tenderness, and Filial Affection. As he feels this with great Warmth in his own Breast, so he describes it with a great deal of Energy in speaking of others. What a pretty Picture does he give of a young Daughter's Affiduity in attending her Father, in his last Sickness ?

Whether

⁹⁰ P. 33. ⁹¹ Poems, p. 27.

Whether the Day it's wonted Course renew'd,
 Or mid-night Vigils wrap'd the World in Shade;
 Her tender Task assiduous she purs'd,
 To sooth his Anguish, or his Wants to aid:
 To soften ev'ry Pain,
 The meaning Look explain;
 And scan the forming Wish, e'er yet exprest:
 The dying Father smil'd
 With Fondness on his Child;
 And when his Tongue was mute, his Eyes her Goodness bless'd.⁹²

And how strongly does he express the Grief
 of a Mother, on the Loss of her Son, by a vio-
 lent Death?

Dear hapless Youth!—what felt thy Mother's Heart
 When in her View thy lifeless Form was laid?
 Such Auguish when the Soul and Body part,
 Such agonizing Pangs the Frame invade:
 "Was there no Hand, she cry'd, my Child to aid?—

AND so on, thro' the whole ⁹³ Page, to

"And art thou to my Ams—ah! art thou thus restor'd!"

I SHALL only add to these Proofs of his Emo-
 tion, and Force in Writing, some which will
 show that he can even rise to the Sublime. Such,
 I think, is his Couplet on the Creation of Light;
 in his Hymn, to the Supreme Being:

When Darkness rul'd with universal Sway;
 He spoke, and kindled up the Blaze of Day.⁹⁴

AND that Idea, of the whole Creation's being
 conceiv'd and executed, as one and the same Act;
 in the following Passage.

⁹² P. 122. ⁹³ P. 116. ⁹⁴ P. 8.

Hail, Sovereign Goodness, all-productive Mind !
 On all thy Works thyself inscrib'd we find.
 How various all, how variously indow'd !
 How great their Number, and each Part how good !
 How perfect then must the great Parent shine ?
 Who, with one Act of energy Divine,
 Laid the vast Plan and finish'd the Design. ⁹⁵

SUCH, his Description of the Whale ; in Imitation of the Psalmist.

Here the huge Potent of the scaly Train,
 Enormous, sails incumbent o'er the Main ;
 An animated Isle : and in his Way
 Dashes to Heaven's blue Arch the foamy Sea.
 When Skies and Ocean mingle Storm and Flame,
 Portending instant Wreck to Nature's Frame ;
 Pleas'd in the Scene, he mocks with conscious Pride
 The volley'd Lightning, and the surging Tide :
 And, while the wrathful Elements engage,
 Foments with horrid Sport the Tempest's Rage. ⁹⁶

SUCH is his Imagination of the Terrors that distract the Mind of the Wicked, in two Passages so lately ⁹⁷ quoted ; and such, in the two following on the same Subject.

'Tis thine to fear hereafter, if not feel,
 Plagues that can boast no precedent in Hell.
 Ev'n in the silent, safe, domestic Hour,
 Ev'n in the Scene of Tenderness and Peace ;
 Remorse, more fierce than all the Fiends below,
 In Fancy's Ears shall with a thousand Tongues
 Thunder Despair and Ruin : all her Snakes

Shall rear their speckled Crests aloft in Air
 With ceaseless horrid Hiss ; shall brandish quick
 Their forked Tongues, or roll their kindling Eyes
 With sanguine fiery Glare. —————⁸

————— To thy Dreams
 Th' infernal Gulph shall open ; and disclose
 It's latent Horrors. O'er the burning Lake
 Of blue sulphureous Gleam, the piercing Shriek,
 The Scourge incessant, and the clanking Chain,
 Shall scare thee ev'n to Frenzy. On thy Mind
 It's fiercest Flames shall prey, while from it's Depth
 Some gnashing Fury beckons thy Approach ;
 And, thirsty of Perdition, waits to plunge
 Thy naked Soul ten thousand Fathom down
 Amidst the boiling Surges. —————⁹

S E C T. IV.

Of his describing Visible Objects.

I COME now to the fourth and last, and by much the most difficult Part of my Undertaking. And here I seem to myself to be like one that is entering on a wide Field, in which there is not a single Track to direct his Steps ; only the Point he aims at appears obscurely, and at a Distance, before him : and where he cannot meet with any Path, he must endeavour to press on through the Bushes and Brambles, as well as he can. Or, (to raise this low Prose Simile by Virgil's Epic one,) Quale

Quale per incertam lunam, sub luce malignâ,
Est iter in sylvis; ubi cœlum condidit umbrâ
Jupiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem.

As puzzled Travellers bewilder'd move,
The Moon scarce glimmering thro' the dusky Grove;
When Jove from mortal Eyes has snatch'd the Light,
And wrapt the World in undistinguish'd Night. *

THE Gentleman, who has given the Account of our Author prefix'd to his Works, says that it has been observ'd by others; "That it must be "Matter of Amusement to the curious Reader, "to remark how well the Poet describes Objects which he never saw; and expresses so as "to be understood by others, those Ideas which "he himself cou'd never conceive."—In truth, this is extreamly surprizing; and very difficult, to be fully accounted for: however, I shall endeavour to account for it as far as I am able; and where I find myself quite at a loss, I shall be very ready to own my Ignorance.

IT is remarkable enough, that some of the greatest Poets that ever were in the World, have been blind; and 'tis very probable, that the Loss of their Sight may have added to the Force of their Imagination, as far as it went: in the same Manner, and for the same Reasons, that we think the more intensely of any one thing, when we shut out all the other Objects that are round about us. But a Poet born blind, or (which is much the same thing) one who has been blind from his early Infancy, is still a Novelty;

* Virgil's *AEn.* 6, 272; and Pitt's Translation, Ib. 384.
and

and a thing much to be wonder'd at. Our great *Milton* did not lose his Sight till he was ² about fifty Years old; and *Homer*, for ought we know, might have enjoy'd his, till after he had finish'd his two most celebrated Poems.

OUR Author (as has been mention'd often before) lost his Sight entirely, before he was half a Year old: and consequently whatever Ideas he may have in relation to visible Objects, must have been acquir'd only from the Characters he has learnt of them from Books and Conversation; and some suppos'd Analogies between those Characters, and any of the Ideas in the Stock he has laid in, either from his other Senses, or his own Reflections upon them. Notwithstanding which, he speaks very frequently of the Objects and Ideas belonging to Sight, with great Familiarity, and Boldness; and generally, without Impropriety.

To make every thing as clear as I can, in so intricate a Subject: I shall set down the Facts from his own Writings, under distinct Heads; and add my own Guesses towards accounting for them, under each of those Heads.

IN the first place then, our Author speaks of Day, and Night;—Light, and Darkness;—of the Eye, View, and Sight;—of the Sun, Moon, and Stars;—of Lightning, and Meteors;—of the Beams of the Sun;—and of the Flashing, Gleaming, Glowing, Glaring, and Blazing of different Objects; some of these in a literal Way, but more in a profesi'd metaphorical one.

² *Newton's Life of Milton*, p. xxxvii.

HIS general Notion of Day, (beside the Idea of Duration which he has in common with us,) seems to me to be the Idea of an “ unknown ‘ something, that is very lively, and joyous ;” but the distinguishing Joy of it, that we have in seeing the Light, and all the Variety of Objects that are gilded and shown to so much Advantage by it, he can only talk of, ³ as he does of the Joys of Heaven : which, (as the Scripture assures us,) it has not enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive.

HIS general Notion of Night, as its opposite, is an Idea of something very gloomy and melancholy ; not unlike the most vulgar idea ⁴ of Hell, in all Ages.

To be a little more particular on these two Articles : I imagine that his Notion of Day may comprehend in it, beside this unknown Part, all the following known Ideas : ⁵ Warmth, ⁶ Variety of Sounds, Society, and ⁷ Chearfulness.

HIS

³ If up to Heav'n's ætherial Height

Thy Prospect to elude I rise,
In Splendor there severely Bright

Thy Presence shall my Sight surprize ;
There, beaming from their Source Divine,
In full Meridian, Light and Beauty shine.

p. 17.

⁴ He himself joins Night and Hell together.

p. 25; 6.

⁵ ————— I feel internal Day ;
Transfusive Warmth thro' all my Bosom glows.

p. 28; v. 9.

His Notion of Night, comprehends the several Ideas of ⁸ Silence, ⁹ Solitude, ¹⁰ Melancholy, and ¹¹ Horror; each of which he himself has

C₄ expressly

‘ Banish’d from Day each dear Delight ;
And shook with conscious Starts the Night.

p. 28; y. 14.

7 ————— Tho' Day

Pours on their Sight it's Soul-refreshing Stream ;
To me extinct in everlasting Shades !

P. 149; y₄ 1.

For her, black Sadness clouds my brightest Day;

For her in Tears the midnight Vigils roll :

P. 127; 6.

⁸ Night brooding o'er her mute Domain,

In rayless Silence wraps her Reign.

p. 26, 8.

With her, the Shades of Night their Horrors lose;

It's deepest Silence charms, if she be by.

-29- 6

9 In hopes his Terror to elude,
By Day he mingles with the Crowd ;
Yet finds his Soul to Fears a Prey,
In busy Crowds and open Day :
If Night alone his Walk surprize,
What horrid Visions round him rise !

P. 32; Y. 24.

"Primeval Night resumes her gloomy Reign.

p. 11. y. 18.

The Scene of Night and Woes.

p. 23, 12.

O'er all the mournful Plain

Let Night, and Sorrow, reign,

P. III. 13.

"Than Night more dreadful, in her blackest Shroud,

p. 150, 3. See p. 27. y. 3 to 6.

expressly annex'd to it, in some Part or other of his Poems.

I AM apt to suspect, that he may formerly have admitted a Mixture from the Sense of Feeling, into his strongest Ideas of Darkness: and that as the Scripture ¹² (and our great Poet *Milton* from them) have call'd it palpable, ¹³ he may sometimes have conceived it, as if it really was so.

HE seems to use the Words, ¹⁴ Eye, View, and Sight;

¹² Darkness that may be felt. Exod. Ch. x. v. 21; —— The Palpable Obscure. *Paradise Lost*: B. 2. v. 406.

¹³ Let this revolving Day,
Deep ting'd with conscious Gloom, roll flow along.

p. 113. v. 1.

Hell's mazy Frauds deep in his Bosom roll;
And all her Gloom hangs heavy on his Soul.

p. 132, 14.

Beneath the pendent Globe if laid,
If plung'd in Hell's Abyss profound,
I call on Night's impervious Shade
To spread essential Darkness round;
Conspicuous to thy wide Survey,
Ev'n Hell's grim Horrors kindle into Day.

This last Passage, in particular, shows that he sometimes considers Darkness as more than a mere Privation; and there ought to be something of the same Way of Thinking, where he speaks of Death's

————Inexorable Gloom.

p. 116. v. 7.

¹⁴ Thy Wisdom who can comprehend?
It's highest Point what Eye can find?

p. 17, 3.

From Films of Error purge the Mental Eye.

169, 11.

But

Sight; indifferently, either for the Mind or for Ideas in the Mind.

MR. *Blacklock* must probably have been often told, that our Sight conveys much quicker, livelier, and more pleasing, (or as I should chuse to express it to himself, much more Poetical) Ideas of Things to the Mind, than our Feeling does; that these Ideas are all brought to us, by the Means of what we call Light, striking variously on our Eyes: and that the chief Source or Dispenser of this Light, is the Sun. This (together with the Ideas that he has gotten in common with us, "from Philosophy) must make him

But soon, too soon, in Fancy's timid Eyes,
Wild Waves shall roar, and Conflagrations spread.

125, 6.

Hence, hence, indignant turn thy Eyes,
To my dejected Soul I said.

41, 12.

If to Mankind I turn my View.

41, 1.

How rare such Views the Heart expand !

31, 19.

Her Angel-form thy Sight shall charm,
Thy Heart her Angel-goodness warm.

41, 16.

Still the sad Vision swims before my Sight. 119. 2.

" He has very right Philosophical Ideas, as such, not only of the Sun, but of the Moon, and Stars: as may appear from the following Passages.

Thou all-enliv'ning Flame, intensely bright,
Whose sacred Beams illume each wandring Sphere
That thro' high Heav'n reflects thy trembling Light,
Conducting round this Globe the varied Year.

p. 112.

He

him consider the Sun, as a very glorious Being ; and indeed this Idea of Glory seems from his Works, to be ¹⁶ his principal Idea of the Sun.

His chief Ideas of the Moon ¹⁷, and Stars, are probably of the same kind ; only in less Degrees.

His Idea of Lightning ¹⁸, and Meteors, I suppose to be still of the same kind ; only with the Addition of the Ideas, of more Violence, and shorter Duration.

THIS Idea of Glory may be us'd by him to supply the Room of our Idea of Light ; and what-ever

He bad the Silver Majesty of Night
Revolve her Circles ; and encrease her Light ;
Assign'd a Province to each rolling Sphere ;
And taught the Sun to regulate the Year.

p. II.

Whilst others view Heav'n's all-involving Arch,
Bright with unnumber'd Worlds ; and lost in Joy,
Fair Order and Utility behold :—
To me, those fair Vicissitudes are lost.

p. 144.

¹⁶ Where'er the Nine their tuneful Presence deign,
There shall thy Glory with unclouded Blaze
Command immortal Monuments of Praise ;
From Clime to Clime the circling Sun shall view
It's rival Splendor still his own pursue.

p. 140, 6.

¹⁷ He calls the Moon,
— The Silver Majesty of Night. II, 13.
And the Stars, “ the Argent 'Train,’ ” of the Evening.

12, 13.

¹⁸ — Lightning's Flash —

19, 17.
— The

ever we call Luminous, he may conceive as Glorious¹⁸.

HIS Notion of the Beams of the Sun, seems to be compos'd of this¹⁹, Idea of Glory, and that of Rapidity; and I am a little inclin'd to suspect, that he may²⁰ possibly have admitted that of Solidity too into it, formerly; as was said before²¹, in the Case of Darkness.

HIS Idea of a Blaze is certainly this of Glory²², if I am right before in supposing it the chief Ingredient

— The Meteor's sudden Ray.

(Of Lightning.) 33, 2.

— Of the State of the Blest: see Paragraph the second, in Note²³, p. 21. anteh.—and, of the Deity, Note²⁴. p. 23.

¹⁸ He applies the same Ideas in speaking of Heaven;

In vivid Glory where the faintest Rays
Out-flash the Splendor of our mid-day Sun.

151, 10.

¹⁹ Like Sun-beams sheen her waving Locks;

Her Een, like Stars were bright.

(In his Old-Scotch Song.) 83, 2.

Swift as a Sun-beam ————— p. 38, v. 14.

²⁰ Far as the pointed Sun-beam flies.

p. 24, v. 13.

Cou'd I, like *Uriel*, on some pointed Ray

To your far distant Eden wing my Way.

167, 6.

²¹ P. 40.

²² Amid the Sun's full Blaze —————

18, 6.

— The Blaze of Day.

8, 6.

View its full Blaze in open Prospect glow.

(Of the Glories of Heaven.) 128, 14.

gredient in his Idea of the Sun : and those of ²¹, Flashing, Gleaming, Glowing, and Glaring, may be all of the same kind, under various Characters and in different Degrees.

WHAT his Idea of this Sort of Glory is, I cannot at all determine : and it would be a very particular Pleasure to me, to have an Opportunity of conversing with him on that, and many other Doubts, that must arise in reading his Works. Yet I think I could guess sometimes at what turn his Answers might take ; and doubt not but that they would often be very odd, and entertaining. Thus, (to instance in a Point very lately mention'd,) I imagine that if he was ask'd the Question, he would answer ; “ That a brisk Tune “ was much more like the Rays of the Sun, than “ a melancholy One ;” and should not be surpriz'd if a Person that had been blind as early as Mr. *Blacklock*, and had not been so well instructed in Philosophy as he has been, was to ask ; “ Why they had never wove some of them into “ a Robe, for a King to wear upon the Day of “ his Coronation ?”

SECONDLY, our Author not only makes use of Epithets from each of the five principal Colours,

²² From World to World, new Wonders still I find ;
And all the Godhead flashes on my Mind.

15, 16.

— — — — — The mid-day Gleam.

113, 5.

— — — Glowing Stones — — —

(Of Diamonds) 36, 2.

Tho' Fortune nurse him with a Mother's Care ;
And deck her Pageant in a short-liv'd Glare.

173, 8.

lours, (at least, if we may be allow'd to substitute Purple in the Room of Violet) but also, from White, or the Appearance of all of them when associated together ;—from some of the intermediate Colours ;—from various Colours, in the same Object ;—and from the different Degrees of Brightness, and Dimness of Colours, in different Objects ; or on different Occasions.

I do not remember that he annexes the word Red, to any thing but ²⁴ Lightning.—Yellow, he attributes very properly to ²⁵ Gold, among Metals ; and to the ²⁶ Crocus, among Flowers.—Green, as properly, to ²⁷ Trees or Arbours, ²⁸ Grass-Fields, Valleys, and Plains.—Blue, to the ²⁹ Sea, ³⁰ the Heavens, and ³¹ the Morning.

—And

²⁴ As e'er the long-collected Storm descend,
Red Lightnings flash.—

117, 4.

Till his Red Terrors *Jove* again display.

134, 5.

²⁵ With Toil amass a mighty Store
Of glowing Stones, or yellow Ore.

36, 2.

²⁶ In Yellow Glory let the Crocus shine.

135, 19.

²⁷ ————— Green Retreat.

123, 9.

Beneath a Green Shade————

79, 5.

²⁸ Here Verdant Pastures wide extended lie,

10, 24.

And yield the grazing Herd exuberant supply.

143, 9.

The Verdant Vale————

87, 2.

And milder Breezes fann'd the Verdant Plain.

13, 5.

²⁹ The Azure Kingdoms of the Deep——

13, 5.

³⁰ On liquid Air he bad the Columns rise

8, 11.

That prop the starry Concave of the Skies ;

Diffus'd the Blue Expanse from Pole to Pole.

—Heav'n's

—And Purple to the ³³ Evening, in one Place ;
and to ³⁴ Grapes, and ³⁵ Hyacinths, in others.

WHITENESS, (if he uses the word Silver for White, as he does Yellow for Gold,) is attributed by him to the ³⁶ Moon, the ³⁷ Wings of an Angel, and to a ³⁸ clear transparent Stream. As to the intermediate Colours ; he uses some of the softer Degrees of Red, for the ³⁹ Complexion, for the ⁴⁰ Morning, for ⁴¹ ripen'd Fruits, and for Wine ;

—Heav'n's Blue Arch————— 13, 18.

The Blue Serene————— 51, 3.

³¹ Azure Dawn————— 81, 1.

³² Now Purple Evening ting'd the Blue Serene. 87, 1.

³⁴ Rich swells the Purple Grape————— 112, 5.

³⁵ Here Hyacinths in Purple Sweetness rise. 135, 21.

³⁶ — The Silver Majesty of Night. 11, 13.

³⁷ Immortal Guardians of the Sky
Their Silver Wings display. 69, 15.

³⁸ — By the Margin of the Silver Stream. 113, 7.

And he may mean the same by his, Crystal Stream. 88, 13.

³⁹ The Rose lent Blushes to her Cheek. 83, 3.

⁴⁰ Awake, you Nymphs, the Blushing Bride,
T' eclipse Aurora's Rosy Pride. 52, 18.

— The Blushing Morn.
The Rosy Wings of Morn. 15, 10.

⁴¹ Autumn's Blushing Gifts————— 18, 9.

126, 19.

4¹ Wine ; Gold-Colour, for 4³ Corn ; and Chesnut, for the 4⁴ Hair.

He speaks of various Colours, in the same Object ; as in 4⁵ Flowers ; the 4⁶ Wings of a Gold-Finch : and the 4⁷ Rainbow.

He attributes Paleness to 4⁸ Grief, 4⁹ Fear, and 5⁰ Sickness : and on the contrary, gives a Brightness

4² *Hebe, fill the Rosy Bowl !*

37, 8.

4³ Plant the Fields with Golden Grain.

36, 3.

Here Golden Grain rewards the Peasant's Care.

11, 2.

Rich swells the Purple Grape, or waves the Golden Grain.

112, 5.

4⁴ Unplaited now his Cravat hung :
Undress'd, his Chesnut Hair.

83, 20.

4⁵ From each Flow'r of Varied Hue.

71, 13.

And Tulips, ting'd with Beauty's fairest Dyes.

135, 22.

4⁶ That Gold-finch, with her Painted Wings,
Which gaily looks and sweetly sings,
That, and if aught I have more fine,
All, all, my Charmer, shall be thine.

(In the Poem, which he wrote when he was but twelve
Years old.)

73, 8.

4⁷ Wide o'er the Heav'ns the Various Bow he bends ;
It's Tinctures brightens, and it's Arch extends.

10, 16.

4⁸ These Pallid Cheeks how long shall Sorrow stain ?

93, 4.

4⁹ Pale Fear—————

28, 9.

5⁰ Quick-panting Asthma, and Consumption Pale.

118, 13.

ness to his Colouring of ⁵¹ the Sun, ⁵² and the Eyes;—a Chearfulness ⁵³, to his Green;—a Shining to ⁵⁴ Snow, and ⁵⁵ clear Streams;—and a Glow to his ⁵⁶ Diamonds, and ⁵⁷ Roses.

TOWARD accounting in Part for the Things contain'd under this Head, or at least toward lessening the Wonder that they will be apt to occasion; it may not be improper to observe, in the

⁵¹ But now the Sun declines his radiant Head.

99, 11.

What tho' the radiant Sun and clement Sky
Alternate Warmth and Show's dispense below?

III, 20.

⁵² Dim are her radiant Eyes, and all her Roses fade.
Mother of all human Joys,
Rosy Cheeks, and sparkling Eyes.

(Ode, to Health.) 71, 2.

⁵³ — Smiling Verdure —

55, 5.

⁵⁴ — Lucid Snow.

10, 3.

⁵⁵ Lucid Streams ——————

110, 1.

⁵⁶ With Toil amass a mighty Store
Of glowing Stones, or yellow Ore.

36, 2.

⁵⁷ — Rosy Lustre —

4, 2.

The Violets languish, and the Roses glow.

135, 13.

I was at first quite at a loss, to account for Mr. Blacklock's Notion of Violets being of a languid Colour; but fancy, I may have since hit upon the Reason for it. As in the Study of Natural Philosophy, he has been used to hear the principal Colours nam'd in one regular Order, in which Red is always mentioned first, and Violet last of all; he may thence have gotten an Idea of Red as the strongest, and of Violet as the weakest of all the Colours: and it may be partly from hence, that he attributes Red to such a violent impetuous thing as Lightning; and speaks of Violets, as of a weak, or languid, Colour.

the first place : That wherever our Author uses the words, Yellow, Green, Blue, or any of the other Epithets relating to Colours, he may possibly use them (as Boys very often do Epithets at School) without any determinate Ideas, or at least without the proper Ones. He may have got the Connexion of such and such particular Sounds or Words, with such particular Things, from Conversation, and of others from the Works of our Poets ; and may often apply them properly too, only by the Help of a good and faithful Memory.

A Boy that has got the Connexion of the words *Purpureus Olor*, or *Purpureum Mare*, either by learning some Passages from *Horace*⁵⁸ and *Virgil* by rote, or in the usual Method of consulting his *Gradus* in his Distresses for a Word to lengthen out a Verse, may use the same Expressions very properly together ; tho' he does not know the meaning of the word *Purpureus*, and has never seen either a Swan or the Sea in his Life ; nay even tho' he should never so much as have heard, that a Swan is of a light, and the Sea of a dark Colour.

BUT, in the second place, our Author may have affix'd a Set of Ideas to the Words he uses in relation to Colours ; tho' quite of a different kind, from the Ideas which they give us.

THERE have been some Instances of Persons born blind, who have acquired such an additional Fineness in their Sense of Feeling, and have given

D so

⁵⁸ — *Purpureis ales oloribus.* HOR. Lib. 4. Od. 1, 10.

In mare purpureum. — — — VIRG. G. 4. 373.

so much more Attention to it than a Man who enjoys the constant Use of his Sight would ever afford, that they can distinguish all the principal Colours, (in a Piece of Silk for Instance, or in a Picture,) merely by their Touch: and I have heard that some of them have carried this so far, as to distinguish several of the intermediate Colours; and even the Mixtures of different Tints, in particolour'd Silks.

The very same Variety in the Disposition of the Parts in the Surfaces of Objects, which makes them reflect different Rays of Light to the Eye; may make them feel as differently, to the exquisite Touch of a blind Man.

WHEN such a one has a mind to get Names for these different Sorts of Feelings, his readiest way to learn them is by enquiring of those that see, what Name relating to Colours they give to such an Object; and then he can annex the same Name to the particular Sensation it gives him, upon touching it. Thus he may make a new Sort of Vocabulary to himself; in relation to things which give us the Ideas of more or less pleasing Colours, by the Eye; and which give him the Ideas of greater Smoothness, or Roughness, by the Touch: and in this Case, tho' our Sensations are of such very different Kinds, our Names for them (as far as they go) may be the same.

OUR own Names for Colours are infinitely deficient, (for I cannot in Conscience use ⁵⁹ a less extensive

⁵⁹ The different Shades and Degrees under each of the principal Colours, are innumerable: and as to the most common of them, in particular; it has been doubted by some, whether any

extensive Word for it,) in Comparison of the real Differences, and Degrees of them, in Things; and his Vocabulary, as to this Point, may well be suppos'd to be yet more deficient than ours: but such a Vocabulary, of some kind or other, he may make; and such, 'tis very evident from his Writings, Mr. *Blacklock* has actually stored up in his Memory; and makes use of as occasions call upon him for it, and that generally with Propriety.

WHEREVER Mr. *Blacklock* uses any Words from this Stock or Vocabulary, in his Poems, he must speak in a metaphorical Sense; just where we should speak in the proper one. Thus (as has been said before) he uses the Words Sight, View, and Eyes; for the Mind, Perception, or Thoughts: —Luminous, or Shining; for, Glorious:—Sees or Beholds; for, Perceives:—Green, with him, may mean something pleasing or soft to the Touch; and Red, something rough or displeasing: and so of the rest.

'Tis a Consequence of this, that wherever he speaks⁶⁰ of GOD's seeing things (as he does in several Places,) he must be less metaphorical than we are, when we use the same Expressions.

'Tis impossible to say how far this Vocabulary
D 2 of

any two Leaves, even on the same Tree, are exactly of the same Green. If this be true, there must be numberless Millions of Millions, of different Greens only; and I suppose that all our English Names, for all Sorts of Colours, if put together, could scarce be made to amount to so small a Number, as Fifty.

⁶⁰ P. 7; y. 14.—14; 24.—15; 1, and 13.—16; 1, to 12.—18; 4.—21; 12, 13.—28; 16, &c.—137; 19—144; 16.

of his may reach ; or how far he may compound and divide, or reason upon these subsidiary Ideas, which he makes use of in the room of the Ideas which we have by the Inlet of our Sight. But however unaccountable it may be ; 'tis certain he does not only agree with us in the Usage of many single Terms and Epithets relating to visible Objects ; but also that he has several Descriptions, and some of Length, which are so just, and in such unexpected Circumstances ; as must astonish, even while they please us

As to Still Life, he has given either Pictures, or Sketches, or at least some picturesk Strokes, on all the following Subjects : the ^{“1”} Morning, ^{“2”} Sunset, and ^{“3”} Evening ;—the ^{“4”} Sun, the ^{“5”} Moon,

^{“1”} What tho' her Cheeks a living Blush display,
Pure as the Dawn of Heav'n's unclouded Day.

p. 94. v. 22.

^{“2”} But now the Sun declines his radiant Head ;
And rising Hills project a lengthening Shade.

99, 12.

^{“3”} Mild gleams the Purple Evening o'er the Plain.

90, 14.

^{“4”} ————— Oft while the Sun
Darts boundleſs Glory thro' th' Expanse of Heav'n,
A Gloom of congregated Vapours rise
Than Night more dreadful in her blackest Shroud ;
And o'er the Face of Things incumbent hang,
Portending Tempest : till the Source of Day
Again asserts the Empire of the Sky,
And o'er the blotted Scene of Nature throws
A keener Splendor ————— 150, 8.

See 112, 13 to 16 ; and 133, 1 to 5.

^{“5”} By the pale Glimmer of the conscious Moon.

156, 1.

See 11, 14 ; and 80, 11.

Moon, and the “ Stars ;—the ” Rainbow ;—”
 Lightning ;—” Sulphur, Burning ;—” Streams
 foul’d with Rain :—a very good ” Flower-Piece ;
 and two or three Landskips ”², or different Views
 of the Country.

D 3 His

” — Grateful Evening, with her Argent Train. 12, 13.

” See p. 47, Note 47 antech :

” — The Lightning’s slanting Way.

” — O’er the burning Lake 50, 11.

Of Blue sulphureous Gleam ——————— 161, 14.

” As swift descending Showers of Rain ;

Deform with Mud the clearest Streams.

” Let long-liv’d Pansies here their Scents bestow ; 44, 9.
 The Violets languish, and the Roses glow :
 In Yellow Glory let the Crocus shine ;
 Narcissus here his love-sick head recline :
 Here Hyacinths in Purple Sweetness rise ;
 And Tulips, ting’d with Beauty’s fairest Dyes.

” Him bright *Hygeia*, in Life’s early Dawn, 135, 22.
 Thro’ Nature’s favourite Walks with transport led ;
 Thro’ Woods umbrageous, or the op’ning Lawn,
 Or where fresh Fountains lave the flow’ry Mead :
 There Summer’s Treasures to his View display’d
 What Herbs and Flow’rs salubrious Juice bestow,
 Along the lowly Vale, or Mountain’s arduous Brow.

” On rising Ground the Prospect to command,
 Unting’d with Smoak where vernal Breezes blow,
 In rural Neatnes let my Cottage stand ;
 Here wave a Wood, and there a River flow.

*p. 146; y. 4.

Plant

HIS Picture of a ⁷³ Lyon, is no bad one ; and the Colouring in the angry Eyes ⁷⁴ of his Snakes is as strong, and bold, as any thing in Painting can well be.

HIS Description of a Man struggling in the Water ⁷⁵, in the Agonies of Death, is of the same kind ; and he has another which is as soft and pleasing, as that is strong and terrible. What I mean, is the Pretty Shepherdes in his Pastoral Song ; the old Language of which agrees very well with his Subject. As this is the longest Description, of this kind, that he has ever aim'd at ; I shall insert it here, in Spite of the old Scotch Words, that abound in it.

*Twas

Plant the Fields with Golden Grain ;
 Crowd with lowing Herds the Plain :
 Bid the Marble Domes ascend,
 Bid the pleasant View extend ;
 Streams, and Groves, and Woods appear.

36, 7.

⁷³ Here stalks the shaggy Monarch of the Wood ;
 Taught from thy Providence to ask his Food :
 To thee, O Father ! to thy bounteous Skies,
 He rears his Mane, and rolls his glaring Eyes.

12, 4.

⁷⁴ _____ All her Snakes
 Shall rear their speckled Crests aloft in Air,
 With ceaseless horrid Hiss ; shall brandish quick
 Their forked Tongues, and roll their kindling Eyes
 With sanguine fiery Glare._____

160, 22.

⁷⁵ P. 30. anteh.

'Twas e'er the Sun exhal'd the Dew,
 Ae morn of chearful May ;
 Forth GIRZY walk'd the Flow'rs to view,
 A Flow'r mair sweet than they !

Like Sun-beams sheen her waving Locks ;
 Her Een like Stars were bright :
 The Rose, lent Blushes to her Cheek ;
 The Lily, purest white.

Jimp was her Waste ; like some tall Pine,
 That keeps the Woods in awe :
 Her Limbs, like Iv'ry Columns turn'd ;
 Her Breasts, like Hills of Snaw.

Her Robe, around her loosely thrown,
 Gave to the Shepherd's Een,
 What fearless Innocence wou'd show ;
 The rest was all unseen. ⁷⁶

THE Beauty of the Human Face is a common Subject with him ; and he not only gives it the same Colours which he has here ⁷⁷, in the Times of Joy and Health : but paints all the different Languishings of it, in great ⁷⁸ Distress ; in ⁷⁹ Sickness ; and in a ⁸⁰ Fainting-Fit.

D 4

THE

⁷⁶ 83, 12.⁷⁷ The Cheek, with Lilies ting'd and Rosy Dye. 56, 14.⁷⁸ ————— When that CheekTing'd with the Blush of Heav'n's unfaded Rose,
 Grew pale with pining Anguish. —————

162, 16.

⁷⁹ When languish'd ev'ry tender Grace,
 Each op'ning Bloom that ting'd his Face ;
 And Pangs convuls'd his Frame.

(Of an Infant.) 66, 6.

⁸⁰ From his wan Cheek the Rosy Tincture flies ;
 The Lustre languish'd in his closing Eyes. 89, 18.

THE Eyes, which one should least expect to be a Subject for his Pencil, are attempted by him as frequently, as anything under this Head ; ⁸¹ and, (what is very surprizing,) with as much Success.

THE

⁸¹ He speaks of sparkling Eyes, in his Ode to Health ;
Mother of all human Joys,
Rosy Cheeks, and sparkling Eyes.

71, 2.

And of his *Urania* :

With her, the Shades of Night their Horrors lose ;
It's deepest Silence charms, if she be by :
Her Voice the Music of the Dawn renews ;
It's lambent Rādiance sparkles in her Eye.

128, 8.

He speaks of fine Eyes, in Sorrow ;
Thro' Tears behold a Sister's Eyes
Emit a faded Ray.

48, 18.

In Concern ;

While touch'd with all thy tender Pain
The Muses breathe a mournful Strain,
O lift thy languid Eye.

65, 3.

In Sickness ;

— Cou'd no Song of melting Woe
Revoke the keen determin'd Blow,
That dim'd his sparkling Eye ?

66, 9.

And in Death :

Stretch'd on cold Earth he lies ;
While in his closing Eyes
No more the Heav'n-illumin'd Lustre shines.

115, 11.

THE Passions, and the Discovery of them, he ascribes to the Eyes, as much as we should do : it is in them chiefly that he paints ⁸² Anger, ⁸³ Love ; ⁸⁴ Haughtiness, ⁸⁵ Benignity ; and ⁸⁶ Grief and Fear.

THE same may be said, in a great measure, of those Imaginary Beings which are chiefly form'd on Ideas of the Passions ; and all the others, which any way belong to what is call'd, the Machinery in Poetry : some of the best Strokes in his Pictures of this kind also, referring chiefly to the Eyes. As particularly in the benign Look of the Angel⁸⁷, before mention'd ; in the Staring of ⁸⁸ Ghosts : and

⁸² Soften, my Fair, those angry Eyes.

73, 11.

⁸³ The speaking Glance, the heaving Breast.

56, 13.

Arise, *Menalcas*, with the Dawn arise ;

For thee thy *Phœbe* looks with longing Eyes. 98, 8.

⁸⁴ —————— The supercilious Eye,

Oft from the Noise and Glare of prosp'rous Life,

On my Obscurity diverts it's Gaze

Exulting ; and, with wanton Pride inflate,

Felicitates it's own superior Lot.

145, 12.

⁸⁵ —————— That Eye benign,

The Seat of Mercy, which to each Distress

Ev'n by thy Foe sustain'd, the gentle Tear

A willing Tribute paid ; now fruitless weeps,

Nor gains that Pity it so oft bestow'd.

158, 3.

⁸⁶ With Fear and Grief in every Eye.

74, 3.

⁸⁷ Note, 6. p. 5.

⁸⁸ While shrouded Manes palely stare ;

And beck'ning, wish to breathe their Care. 33, 14.

and more than once⁸⁹, in his Descriptions of Envy.

AFTER putting so many Passages together relating to visible Objects, from our Author's Works ; I am less surpriz'd than I was in the first reading of them, at his speaking so frequently⁹⁰ as if he actually

⁸⁹ Vice and Envy, flaunt in Smiles alone.

E'erwhile deprest in abject Dust they lay ;
Nor with their hideous Forms affronted Day :
While thy great Genius, in their tortur'd Sight,
Plac'd Truth and Virtue cloath'd with heav'nly Light.

On the Death of Mr. Pope, 131, 6.

Envy, that Tortures her own Heart
With Plagues and every-burning Smart,
Thy Charms Divine expel :
Aghast she shuts her livid Eyes ;
And, wing'd with tenfold Fury, flies
To native Night and Hell.

Hymn to Benevolence, 25, 6.

⁹⁰ How deep the Breeze ! how dim the Light !

What Spectres swim before my Sight !

27, 8.

From the Realms of endless Day
A bright Immortal wing'd his Way :
Swift as a Sun-beam down he flew ;
And stood disclos'd, effulgent to my View.

38, 15.

Then to the Winds his radiant Plumes he spread ;
And from my wond'ring Eyes, more swift than Lightning, fled.

39, 9.

Each former Object of Delight,
Beyond Redemption, wings it's Flight ;
And where it smil'd, the Darling of my Sight,
Prospects of Woe and horrid Phantoms rise.

39, 19.

These

actually enjoy'd his Eye-sight. The Stock of Ideas which he has stor'd up in his Mind, and substituted in the room of our Ideas of things Visible, and with like Names affix'd to them, are so familiar to him ; and are us'd by him in so uncommon, and unaccountable, a Manner; that they seem to serve him as a Subsidiary sort of Sight : and put one in mind of his own Expressions of ⁹¹ Intellectual Rays, ⁹² Internal Day, and ⁹³ the Mental Eye ; as well as of that Passage cited from ⁹⁴ the Psalmist, in the Title Page ; Κυριος σοφος τυφλος, or as our Translators, (by joining the Sense of the Original, to their own) might have render'd it, “ The LORD giveth [Internal] Sight to the Blind.”

IN his Applications, and Guesses, of this kind, I should have expected many more Mistakes, than I have been able to find out in his Poems. As any fault wholly owing to the Loss of his Sight, must be rather a Subject for Compassion, than for Blame ; I shall not scruple to set down what I have

These Eyes then with Pleasure the Dawn cou'd survey ;
Nor smil'd the fair Morning more chearful than they :
Now Scenes of Distress please only my Sight,
I'm tortur'd in Pleasure, and languish in Light.

80, 4.

Long, long on her my dying Eyes suspend,
Till the last Beam shall vibrate on my Sight ;
Then soar, where only greater Joys attend ;
And bear her Image to eternal Light.

129, 4.

⁹¹ 49, 15: ⁹² 23, 8. ⁹³ 169, 11. ⁹⁴ Psalm 146,
7.

I have mark'd as such ", in his Works: by
which

" Our Author seems to use the Word, Blaze, with some Degree of Impropriety, as a Characteristic of Beauty; — as Delightful; — and as Awful.

In Beauty's perfect Blaze.

P. 45, v. 3.

— Tho' the Blaze of Day

Pours on their Sight it's Soul-refreshing Stream. 148, 21.

— Awful, as the Blaze of Day.

72, 8.

There is something not quite right in his Application of the Epithet of Rayless, to Silence; (26, 8:) and something wrong in the Mixture of the Ideas in the former Part of the second Stanza, in his Wish. p. 125; v. 5, 6.

I suppose that our common Way of distinguishing Wines, by the Names of Red, and White; may have led him to speak of Ripe Grapes, as of a fresh Carnation-colour. (11, 3.)

There seems to me to be something either of Obscurity, or Mistake, in this Couplet relating to the Morning;

Boast no more thy Rosy Light,

If *Chloe* smile thee into Night.

81, 6.

And in the latter Line, of this;

So Fools their Flocks to sanguine Wolves resign;

So trust the cunning Fox to prune the Vine.

99, 4.

And an improper Connexion of Ideas, in this,

What Cave profound, what Star sublime,

Shall hide me from thy boundless View?

17, 10.

There is a Passage in his Pastoral address'd to *Evanthe*, which is apt to make one suspect, that he imagines that we can distinguish things farther by our Hearing, than we can by our Sight. 94; I — 4.

These are the chief things that struck me as Mistakes of this kind, in reading his Works: and if one thoroughly considers his want of Sight, and his Freedom and Boldness in speaking of visible Objects; and how few these Mistakes are, and most of them how slight; I think that they would afford much better grounds for commending, than for blaming our Author.

which means it will appear, how few they are ; and some of those so small, as not to be discernable to every Eye.

I HAVE now gone thorough all the several Points, which I propos'd to myself, on my first sitting down to this Work : and shall only add that a Man of so much Goodness, and such uncommon Merits, as Mr. *Blacklock* is prov'd to be in the foregoing Sheets; was born to nothing but Poverty ; has been hinder'd from assisting himself, by his unfortunate Blindness, from his Infancy : and has long subsisted, and does still subsist, almost solely, on the Charity of his Friends.

WHAT an Object, what a happy Opportunity is here, for any one who is capable of it, (either from his Affluence or his Power,) to acquire a good deal of solid and unenvied Reputation, by raising a Person of this Turn and of such extraordinary Desert, to some Situation where he may be above Want ; or rather by which he might be enabled, in some degree, to exert and enjoy the beneficent, and noble Dictates, of his Soul !



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